**Interactive Read Aloud: Langston Hughes, American Poet by Alice Walker**

**Name:** Rachel Fischhoff **Date:** January 18, 2011

**Langston Hughes, American Poet, Alice Walker**

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| **Target Grade: 5**  **Lesson Source/s: (if not original): Langston Hughes, American Poet, by Alice Walker**  **Lesson Objective: Students will identify important events in Langston Hughes’s life by completing a KWL chart as a class. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**  **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**  **Standards:** R–5–4.2 Paraphrasing or summarizing key ideas/plot, with major events sequenced, as appropriate to text (State), R–5–4.3 Generating questions before, during, and after reading to enhance recall, expand understanding and/or gain new information (Local)  **Materials & Advanced Preparation: post-it-ed book, chartpaper**  **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**  **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**  **Prior Knowledge and Skills Needed: summarizing, making inferences**  **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**  **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**  **Multicultural Component: narrative traces African American history, deals with economic inequality, turn of the century immigration. Narrative focuses specifically on how inequality and racism affect 1. Employment and education opportunities and 2. Individual and group identity formation.**  **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**  **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**  **Key/New Vocabulary: I think geography more than vocabulary could be helpful to review or somehow incorporate to make sense of the story. How will you address geography?**  **Be on lookout for understanding of:**  **Racial discrimination**  **Racial epithet**  **identity**  **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**  **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_** |

**Interactive Read Aloud Lesson Procedure**

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| **Teacher Actions** | **Student Learning Activities** | **Form of Assessment** |
| * 1. **Connection** * Readers, I am very excited to share this book with you today, Langston Hughes, American Poet by one of my favorite authors, Alice Walker. This book is a biography. You have already read of Langston Hughes’s poems. Now we’ll have the opportunity to learn more about his childhood and early adulthood. * Why do readers read the biographies of authors and poets? Sometimes, learning about a writer’s life experiences can help us understand their work in a new way. Good * For example, before I came to your class, I had read Where the Mountain Meets the Moon, but I didn’t know about Grace Lin’s blog or about Fortune Cookie Fridays. Now I can see that sharing life lessons is something that Grace Lin really cares about. * Today and Friday we are going to be learning about Langston Hughes’s life. We’ll be paying close attention to the life experiences that we think may have influenced him *as a writer* and tracking what we learn on a KWL chart (explain KWL chart) * To begin, what do we already think we *know* about LH and his body of work? * What do we *want to know* about LH’s life that might help us better understand his work? | * Active listening * Generating information and questions | * Active listening * Questions * Participation in KWL |
| * 1. **The Read Aloud: Day One** * Pg. 1 “He heard his mother say she would give Mexico City a try.” * **Think aloud:** I’m noticing that Langston has already traveled a lot, and he’s only six—Missouri, Kansas, Mexico City. I’m wondering how traveling—seeing different landscapes and meeting new people—might influence his perspective as a writer. * Pg. 4 “”…But his mother said she was afraid of earthquakes. In a little while they were headed home to Kansas.” * **Stop and talk:** Langston’s parents disagree about where to live and raise him. What does his father believe and why? What does his mother believe and why? Hold them to the evidence in the text * Pg. 7 “No matter how sad this story sounded while she was telling it, his grandmother never cried. Langston learned not to cry about most things either.” * **T&T:** Hmm, let me reread that last paragraph. Why don’t Langston and his grandmother cry? What does that tell us about them as people? Turn and talk to a partner. * Pg. 8 “It made him feel good to know that people enjoyed something he had written.” * **Think aloud:** I’ve had that feeling before. I’m thinking that good feeling might be part of the reason Langston decided to become a writer. * Pg. 11 “He became lonely for Black people…” * **Stop and talk:** What does Alice Walker mean when she says Langston was ‘lonely for Black people’? Who has an idea? * Pg. 15 “…the next afternoon…Langston met Mr. Hughes on the street.” * **Stop and talk:** Put yourself in Langston’s shoes. What do you think he is feeling when he meets his father for the first time in 11 years? Good * Pg. 19 “He thought it was brave of them to laugh in spite of everything.” * **T&T:** Langston and his father disagree about the Black farmers they see from the train. What does it mean to be brave, and why does Langston believe the farmers are brave for laughing? Turn and talk to a partner. | * Active listening * Responses to questions * Partner talk   Hughes’s relationship with his father is difficult. I think it is complex, and key to Hughes’ character. His determination and strong identity with Black people is something to consider. He could have chosen a different path, one that would have changed his circumstances. He could have lived very comfortably with his dad. This could be something to discuss. | * Observing active listening * Hearing some ideas shared in response to questions * Listening in to partner talk |
| **Anticipated Responses/Outcomes:**   * I think students will use skills in making inferences and using empathy to understand character motivation to understand Langston Hughes and his family * Some students may rely on pictures to guide their contributions. With this book, they should be relying on the words | | |
| 1. **Closing and recording**  * We’ve already learned a lot about Langston Hughes’s life experiences and he’s only 17! Tomorrow we learn even more, but before we close I want to record some of the important things we have learned about Langston Hughes today on our chart. | * Students will share what they think are important experiences in LH’s life * Students can agree/disagree/build on their classmate’s contributions * Students may think of new questions to add to what we Want to Know. | * Communicate what we learned: by creating the chart together.   Be conscious of time/pacing |
| **Anticipated Responses/Outcomes:**   * I anticipate students choosing meaningful life experiences. * It may be difficult to connect important life events to the idea that these shaped LH *as a writer*. | | |
| 1. **The Read Aloud: Day Two**  * *Recap day one events—ends as LH heads down to Mexico with his father.* * Pg. 23 *I’ve known rivers* * **Think aloud:** Hmmm, I’m noticing that Alice Walker mentions that LH wrote this poem just as he was crossing the Mississippi River. In the poem he writes about rivers and waterways in the US and Africa. I’m thinking that he was inspired by being on the Mississippi to use rivers as a metaphor in this poem. * Pg. 25 “Every night he raced over to Harlem…” * **Stop and talk:**  It seems to me like LH is living in two different New York Cities—the NYC of Columbia University and the NYC of Harlem. What do we know about these worlds? How are they similar or different? * Pg. 26 “…Langston threw all his books overboard…” * **Turn and talk:** Wow! I was shocked when I first read that! What do you think? Was LH right to throw his books overboard? Is reading a “secondhand” way of seeing the world? Turn and talk to a partner. OK * Pg. 29 “…he was able to see, face to face, the people he wrote for, and about.” * **Stop and talk:** Authors have different ideas about how to communicate with their readers—some only want their books to speak for themselves, other have blogs or share videos or go on tours. LH went on tours to meet his readers. Why do you think that was important to him as a writer? * Pg. 31 “He had written books of poems and stories, novels…” etc, etc. * **Stop and talk:** LH wrote in lots of different genres for many different audiences. Why do you think that is? * Pg. 33 “LH had shown them how good is was to love one another.” * **Stop and talk:** AW says that LH taught his friends and his readers about love. How did LH come to know about love, and why was it important to him to share this idea with the world? | * Active listening * Responses to questions * Partner talk   How can you angle your questioning to see if they come up with the river as a metaphor?  What are you expecting the kids to know about Columbia University? | * Observing active listening * Hearing some ideas shared in response to questions * Listening in to partner talk |
| **5. Anticipated Responses/Outcomes:**   * Students may need to review the previous day’s reading to make connections. |  |  |
| 1. **Closing and recording**  * Now we’ve learned even more about LH’s life—from the time he was six years old to the day he died in 1967. What have we learned about LH’s life that we think may have influenced him as a writer? | * Adding to KWL chart | * Listening to responses and ideas. |
| 1. **Follow up**  * It would be great to use one of the poems mentioned in the text (Like “I’ve Known Rivers”) as a shared reading text. | * Yes, we will use The Negro Speaks of Rivers and Dream Variation as well as The Ballad of the Landlord these next two weeks |  |

**Reflections:**

How did the lesson plan work? What was effective? What did you learn? What would you change for tomorrow or the next time you will use this plan?

Rachel,

I think it is good to break this book up into two different sessions. The KWL is a fine strategy to employ, and you just want to make sure that most of the time is given over to reading/discussion and plan to work the charting in efficiently. Hughes’s relationship with his father is a very complex issue…..kids may or may not dig into it, but it will be important for them to have an opportunity to discuss.

We can see how it goes on Weds and make necessary adjustments for Friday. Also, I will post copies of 3 poems to the wiki that you can plan to use for shared reading. We’ll talk about how to schedule these.